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REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-22, and 24-34 remain pending: The subject matter of canceled claims 5 and 23 has been incorporated into claims 1 and 19, respectively.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the abstract; rejected claims 1-5 and 19-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Cave '808 (U.S. Patent No. 6,232,808); rejected claims 6-9, 24, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cave in view of Short et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,708,814), and further in view of Devanagundy et al.; rejected claims 10 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cave '808 in view of Short et al. and further in view of Devanagundy et al., and still further in view of Cave '524 (U.S. Patent No. 6,314,524); rejected claims 11, 12, 27, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Devanagundy et al. in view of Cave '808; rejected claims 13, 14, 29, and 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Devanagundy et al. in view of Cave '808, and further in view of Cave '524; rejected claims 15, 16, 31, and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Basso et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,491,815) in view of Cave '808, and further in view of Devanagundy et al.; and rejected claims 17, 18, 33, and 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Basso et al. in view of Cave '808, and further in view of Devanagundy et al., and still further in view of Cave '524.

The objection to the abstract has been obviated by the amendment to the specification above.

Claims 1-4 and 19-22:

Applicants respectfully traverse the § 102(e) rejection of claims 1-4 and 19-22 over Cave '808. Independent claims 1 and 19, as amended, require a method and article of manufacture including, *inter alia*, "set[ting] a clock to send a signal at the expiration time." Cave '808 fails to disclose all limitations of the claimed method and article of manufacture.

With regard to canceled claim 5, page 4 of the Office Action alleges that Cave '808 discloses the above-quoted limitation at col. 7, lines 25-33. This portion of Cave '808, however, provides only that:

Timing operations begin as clock register 202 counts upward at the clock rate of clock 201. Comparator 203 continuously compares the current value of clock register 202 with

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the current timing value loaded into compare register 204. When clock register 202 reaches the value in compare register 204, a processor interrupt is generated and the system acts according to the EID associated with the timing value currently loaded in compare register 204 (processor interrupt not illustrated).

There is no disclosure in this portion of Cave '808 that either clock 201 or clock register 202 is either "set" or that such setting "send[s] a signal at the expiration time," as required by amended claims 1 and 19.

Rather, there is every indication that both clock 201 and clock register 202 are free running, and are not set at all (see col. 6, lines 25-34). Further, it is comparator 203, and not either of elements 201 or 202, that sends out a signal (see col. 7, lines 26-30). Hence, neither the cited portion of Cave '808 nor other portions discloses "sett[ing] a clock to send a signal at the expiration time," as set forth in amended claims 1 and 19.

Because Cave '808 fails to disclose all elements of claims 1 and 19, the § 102(e) rejections of claims 1 and 19 are improper and should be withdrawn. Claims 2-4 and 20-22 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency from claims 1 and 19.

Claims 6-10 and 24-26:

Applicants respectfully traverse the § 103(a) rejection of claims 6-10 and 24-26 over Cave '808 in view of Short et al. and Devanagundy et al. Independent claims 6 and 24 require a method and article of manufacture including, *inter alia*, "set[ting] a timer to send a call back signal at the end of the time period; and start[ing] the timer at the start time." The combination of Cave '808, Short et al., and Devanagundy et al., even if it were proper, fails to teach or suggest the claimed method and article of manufacture.

With regard to claim 6, page 7 of the Office Action alleges that Devanagundy et al. teaches or suggests the above-quoted limitations at col. 5, lines 41-51 and at col. 6, lines 44 and 45. Col. 5, lines 41-51, of Devanagundy et al., however, provides only that:

Timer 300 includes a free-running counter 310, a start count register 320, a subtractor 330, a comparator 340, and storage 350 for time-out values. Output ports of counter 310 and register 320 connect to input ports of subtractor 330, which generates a multi-bit difference signal. Comparator 340 is a multi-bit comparator that compares the difference from subtractor 330 to a time-out value from storage 350 and generates a binary signal

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STAT indicating whether the difference is greater than the time-out value. Alternatively, comparator 340 asserts signal STAT to indicated whether the difference is greater than or equal to the time-out value.

There is no disclosure in this portion of Devanagundy et al. that any of elements 310-350 is "set" to "send a signal at the expiration time," as required by claims 6 and 24. Rather, counter 310 is plainly "free-running" (Fig. 3) and the presence of register 320 does not make the resultant output settable to output a signal at an expiration time. It merely establishes some starting reference point.

Further, col. 6, lines 44 and 45, of Devanagundy et al. provides only that:

MTPE 250 selects or loads the start count for the command in start count register 320, and subtractor 330 determines the difference between the current count in counter 310 and the start count saved when the command was issued.

Merely loading a value in register 320 does not reasonably teach or suggest "start[ing] the timer at the start time" as set forth in claims 6 and 24. Counter 310 is free-running, and the output of element 330 in Fig. 3 is constantly running, regardless of the value in register 320. Thus, neither the cited portion of Devanagundy et al. nor other portions discloses "start[ing] the timer at the start time," as set forth in claims 6 and 24.

In any event, the output signal STAT disclosed by Devanagundy et al. does not reasonably correspond to the claimed "call back signal." A *prima facie* case of obviousness also has not been established for claims 6 and 24 for at least these reasons.

Because a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established for claims 6 and 24, the § 103(a) rejections of claims 6 and 24 are improper and should be withdrawn. Claims 7-9 and 25 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency from claims 11 and 27.

Regarding the rejection of claims 10 and 26, the addition of Cave '524 fails to cure the deficiencies in Devanagundy et al. and Cave '808 noted above with respect to claims 6 and 24. Cave '524 also fails to teach or suggest either of the "determining a first expiration time and a second expiration time" or the "if the first expiration time is not approximately equal . . ." elements of claims 10 and 26, and its addition cannot establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness for these claims.

Claims 11-14 and 27-30:

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Applicants respectfully traverse the § 103(a) rejection of claims 11-14 and 27-30 over Devanagundy et al. in view of Cave '808. Independent claims 11 and 27 require a method and article of manufacture including, *inter alia*, "set[ting] a timer to send a call back signal at the end of the time period; and start[ing] the timer at the start time." The combination of Devanagundy et al. and Cave '808, even if it were proper, fails to teach or suggest the claimed method and article of manufacture.

Page 9 of the Office Action alleges that Devanagundy et al. teaches or suggests the above-quoted limitations at col. 5, lines 41-51 and at col. 6, lines 44 and 45. Devanagundy et al. does not teach or suggest at least the above-quoted "setting" and "starting" portions of claims 11 and 27 for the same reasons given above with regard to claims 6 and 24. A *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established, at least because the combination of references fails to teach or suggest all elements of claims 11 and 27.

A *prima facie* case of obviousness also has not been established for claims 11 and 27, because the single event timing of Devanagundy et al. teaches away from adding the multiple events of Cave '808 (see M.P.E.P. 2145(X)(D)). Such modification would alter the principles of operation of Devanagundy et al., Cave '808, or both. A *prima facie* case of obviousness also has not been established for claims 11 and 27 for at least this additional reason.

Because a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established for claims 11 and 27, the § 103(a) rejections of claims 11 and 27 are improper and should be withdrawn. Claims 12 and 28 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency from claims 11 and 27.

Regarding the rejection of claims 13, 14, 29, and 30, the addition of Cave '524 fails to cure the deficiencies in Devanagundy et al. and Cave '808 noted above with respect to claims 11 and 27. Cave '524 also fails to teach or suggest either of the "determining a received time" or the "determining an expiration time" elements of claims 13, 14, 29, and 30, and its addition cannot establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness for these claims.

Claims 15-18 and 31-34:

Applicants respectfully traverse the § 103(a) rejection of claims 15-18 and 31-34 over Basso et al. in view of Cave '808 and Devanagundy et al. Independent claims 15 and 31 require a method and article of manufacture including, *inter alia*, "set[ting] a timer to send a call back

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signal at the end of the time period; and start[ing] the timer at the start time." The combination of Basso et al., Cave '808, and Devanagundy et al., even if it were proper, fails to teach or suggest the claimed method and article of manufacture.

Page 13 of the Office Action alleges that Devanagundy et al. teaches or suggests the above-quoted limitations at col. 5, lines 41-51 and at col. 6, lines 44 and 45. Devanagundy et al. does not teach or suggest at least the above-quoted "setting" and "starting" portions of claims 11 and 27 for the same reasons given above with regard to claims 6 and 24. A *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established, at least because the combination of references fails to teach or suggest all elements of claims 11 and 27.

A *prima facie* case of obviousness also has not been established for claims 15-18 and 31-34, because one skilled in the art would not have been motivated to combine the references as proposed. To obtain all of the elements in claim 15, the Examiner has added to Basso et al.: 1) Cave '808 which introduces chronological ordering not contemplated by the sender-receiver communication scheme of Basso et al.; and 2) Devanagundy et al. which introduces a call back at the end of a time period that is not contemplated by either Cave '808 or Basso et al. That the original references do not contemplate the added elements teaches away from adding both Cave '808 and Devanagundy et al. in the manner proposed. Cave '808 would alter the principle of operation of Basso et al., and so would Devanagundy et al. A *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established for claims 15-18 and 31-34 for at least this additional reason.

Regarding the rejection of claims 17, 18, 33, and 34, the addition of Cave '524 fails to cure the deficiencies in Devanagundy et al. and Cave '808 noted above with respect to claims 15 and 31. Cave '524 also fails to teach or suggest either of the "select[ing] an expiration time in the set that will occur first" element of claims 17, 18, 33, and 34, and its addition cannot establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness for these claims.

Reconsideration and allowance of pending claims 1-34 is respectfully requested.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, Applicants request that the Examiner contact Alan Pedersen-Giles, attorney for Applicants, at the number below to discuss such matters.

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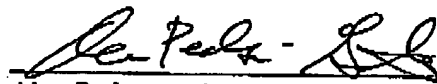
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To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-0221 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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